

Senator Warner, thank you for that insight and inspiration, heart-felt remarks. Thank you very much. Mrs. Robb, thanks for being so kind to this wonderful crew.

Let me say just three things here real quickly. First, our purpose today, second, a task for this CO and crew, and then third, pronounce the commission.

Our role here today is quite simple, to move the marvelous crew behind you onto the fabulous vessel behind me, and then place them into active roles in the commissioned service. We then will infuse in them the strong and enduring sense of service founded in this magnificent commonwealth, and I'm confident they will together do whatever it takes, whenever needed, to protect this great country and its people. That's just the nature of the American craftsman and the United States Sailor.

Captain Kern, your task - you and your men have much to be proud of, but more work to do. You must steer Virginia, the ship and the crew, around this dangerous and uncertain world. Guard her stealth, use her endurance, harvest her sensors, and make ready her firepower. I expect you to dominate in any assignment, from open-ocean to contested littorals.

Now, let me pronounce the commission. For the president of the United States, I hereby place United States Ship Virginia in commission. May God bless and guide this warship and all who sail in her.